

ELABORATION OF AN M&E FRAMEWORK FOR
THE GHANA RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY
PROGRAMME

An Interim Report

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Acronyms

CBOs	Community Based Organisations
GPRS	Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategy
G-RAP	The Governance, Research and Advocacy Project
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEC	Monitoring and Evaluation Consultant
MEF	Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
MSC	Most Significant Change monitoring
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
PMT	G-RAP Project Management Team
RAVI	Rights and Voice Initiative
RAOs	Research and Advocacy Organisations
SNA	Social Network Analysis

1. Terms of Reference

1.1 The Objectives

The Terms of Reference outlined the following as the objectives of my consultancy:

OBJECTIVES

“The overall objective of this consultancy is to develop a M&E Framework for the G-RAP programme which will enable monitoring information on the performance and outcomes of individual grantees to inform on the progress, outputs and outcomes (and eventual impact) of G-RAP.

The M&E Framework shall address the following aspects:

- Enable PMT to report on progress, outputs and outcomes against the G-RAP logical framework, in particular at goal, purpose and output levels and their corresponding indicators.
- Establish source of baseline information against indicators
- Established linkages, where relevant, to efforts to monitor the implementation of the GPRS through the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) and any other such initiatives aimed at poverty and social impact assessment related to monitoring of the GPRS by Government and civil society.
- Draw on information from Grantee reports to G-RAP on their progress against, and outputs and outcomes on policy arising from G-RAP core and institutional capacity building support. A foreseen challenge is establishing the links between institutional capacity building and change-management processes within RAOs with impact on the quality and impact of their research and advocacy programmes that address pro-poor policies and draw on links with community-based organisations.

The M&E Framework should have an action plan that gives clear guidance and direction to the PMT to finalise the framework and commence its implementation in the short-term. The action plan might include the need for additional short-term support to the PMT as well as recommendations for strengthening in G-RAP systems.”

[ToRs for M&E Consultant, March 2005]

1.2 Interpretation and initial response

1. I have not provided any background information on the G-RAP project within this report because it is assumed that its primary audience will be the staff of G-RAP, and the members of the Funders Committee, and Advisory Committee, and relevant staff within LTS and Ernst Young. All of whom should be familiar with the project.

2. This report is based on five days contact with the staff of G-RAP in Accra, in early April 2005, and three days preparatory and write-up time. It is anticipated that it may be the first of a number of inputs into the G-RAP project.
3. During the April visit five days were spent in the G-RAP office working with Hans Determeyer and Peter Evans. I also met more briefly with Ben Afudego and Mike Sackey, from Ernst Young. Outside of the G-RAP office I met with Terry Green, from FFR, who is coordinating the development of the RAVI M&E framework; with Ernest Tay in ISODEC, one of the intended recipients of G-RAP core funding; and with DFID and Dutch Embassy staff associated with G-RAP (Budali Issahaku, and David Kuijper).
4. There were four immediate outputs of the five days work, which were summarised in a five page Aide Memoire:
 - A revision of the project Logical Framework.
 - Development of a draft “business process” diagram (in Gantt chart form) showing the expected connections between M&E and other project activities
 - Clarification of linkages between the revised Logical Framework and narrative & financial reporting requirements, and budgeting procedures.
 - Initial ideas about baseline data collection requirements and methods

2. The 1st tool: The G-RAP Logical Framework

5. The G-RAP Logical Framework is presented in Annex A of the G-RAP Project memorandum, and is used to summarises the core intentions of the project: what it wants to achieve and how it intends to do so. It is very likely that it will be a focus of attention during any mid-term and end-of-project reviews.
6. None of the current G-RAP PMT staff were involved in the development of the current Logical Framework, nor are they very happy with its current contents. They do not feel it is easy to understand, nor does it capture very well what they think are the intentions and strategy of the project. Given their implementation role, it is essential that they have a Logical Framework that they do feel makes sense and which they can work with. Therefore, the main focus of my work with G-RAP staff in April was to help them develop a revised version of the Logical Framework. The revised version is now available in Annex A.
7. **[Recommendation 1]** That revision now needs to be approved by the main stakeholders in G-RAP, especially the members of the Funders Committee and the Advisory Committee, as well as LTS and Ernst Young. **[Recommendation 2]** In the medium term, a procedure also needs to be agreed upon whereby the Logical Framework can be revised and changes authorised, from now on until the end of the project. One approach is that the need for revisions is examined at least once a year during annual project reviews, (where they used). However, given the problems with the existing Logical Framework I would strongly recommend seeking approval for the revised version in Annex A as soon as possible.
8. As well as obtaining approval, it is important that members of the two committees and two consultancy firms involved *understand* the contents of the revised Logical Framework, and the reasons behind the changes that have been made. Both to secure their approval, and to ensure they have appropriate expectations about the project goals and strategy. Consideration should also be given to sharing the

revised Logical Framework (once approved) with the funded RAOs, so they can see exactly what G-RAP sees itself as accountable for. Especially at the Purpose and Goal level. When the Logical Framework is circulated a covering note should explain that aim of the revision was to better represent G-RAPs existing strategy and make it amenable to monitoring and evaluation. It was not an exercise in re-defining the project strategy. The main types of changes that were made are summarised below.

9. **A more actor-oriented Logical Framework.** All the narrative statements now have clearly identifiable actors involved, people or organisations who are doing things for or with other people or organisations.
- The Goal of “Effective pro-poor policy adopted and implemented” is now “Pro-poor policy adopted and implemented effectively by GoG”
 - The “Objective” of “Institutional development of established RAOs” is now the Purpose of “RAOs generate high quality evidence-based research based on robust primary sources”

10. **A more consistent level structure**, with different groups of actors being the main focus at each of the levels of the Logical Framework.
- The Goal is about changes in the behaviour of GoG
 - A Super-Goal could then refer to changes in the lives of poor people within Ghana
 - The Purpose is about changes in the behaviour of RAOs, and any others, using G-RAP outputs.
 - The Outputs are about services provided by the G-RAP PMT
 - The Activities are about actions taken by the G-RAP PMT that will lead to Outputs being available.
 - The role of other actors, who are either affecting the above, or taking the role of intermediaries between them, can be documented in the Assumptions column.

Note: In the Project Memorandum Logical Framework there was no Outputs level, and the Purpose level was followed by an unconventional level called “Objectives”.

11. **Simpler narrative statements, that are less ambitious about what they want to say.** Instead of the Purpose being “To enhance the capacity of research and advocacy organisations (RAOs) to carry out evidence-based research and advocacy activities in support of pro-poor policy” this is broken down into a number of more specific and less ambitious statements, including:
- RAOs are more able to attract, retain, motivate and develop capable staff
 - RAOs generate high quality evidence-based research based on robust primary sources”
 - Etc.

Note: Indicators have been used to specify the meaning of the narrative statements, instead of loading the narrative statements with sub-clauses, and qualifiers.

12. One consequence of these changes is a Logical Framework that is now longer and more detailed than the original in the Project Memorandum (ine pages versus five). This should not be a problem if the Logical Framework is intended to have some operational implications. The G-RAP PMT should be able to develop a short and simple narrative summary for public communications purposes.

13. I have also generated a draft visual representation of the causal processes in the revised Logical Framework (see Annex B). It tries to capture the multiple interconnections between each level, as well as connections within each level. This interpretation needs to be discussed with the PMT, in terms of its accuracy and then its potential usefulness.

1. The 2nd tool: Business Process Mapping

14. A Logical Framework is a plan. There is a risk that, like many plans, especially long term ones, it will sit on the shelf and be ignored. Instead, we need to ensure that its contents connect to and influence other documents and events within G-RAP, especially those involving the PMT and the two committees, in the first instance. To do this we need to develop a clear view of the main processes involved.

15. In the private sector extensive use is made of business process maps, to document and to continuously improve the way they do businesses. Franchises are based on the idea that business processes can be documented so well that they can be packaged and then rented out, or sold. A process in this context is any organisational procedure that is repeated, with frequencies ranging from minute-to-minute to multi-year cycles. Most processes can be improved through repetition, as a result of continuous incremental changes (both explicit and tacit, formal and informal). They can also be improved by more deliberate and less frequent re-engineering.

16. While G-RAP is not a commercial enterprise it does and should have procedures for doing things. Two easily recognisable ones are the ways in which it hires staff and consultants, and the ways it gives grants to RAOs. The procedures that are of special concern in this report are those with longer cycle times. They are the ones where learning is by definition the slowest and most difficult, because of the slow rate of iteration. They are also can be the ones affecting larger sets of resources. In G-RAP these are the grant making cycles, annual planning cycles and the whole project cycle itself, from beginning to the currently expected end date of the project.

17. While work has already been done by the PMT on development of a number of specific procedures, such as financial and progress reporting by funded RAOs, what had not yet been worked through is how these and other activities would best link together within the yearly and longer planning cycles. Including their linkages in with other monitoring and evaluation activities, grant making and project communications.

3.1 Large scale: The G-RAP project as a process over time

18. At the end of my April visit a simplified Gantt¹ chart was constructed, with the involvement of the G-RAP team, to identify how monitoring and evaluation, and other project management activities, would relate to each other over the next two-

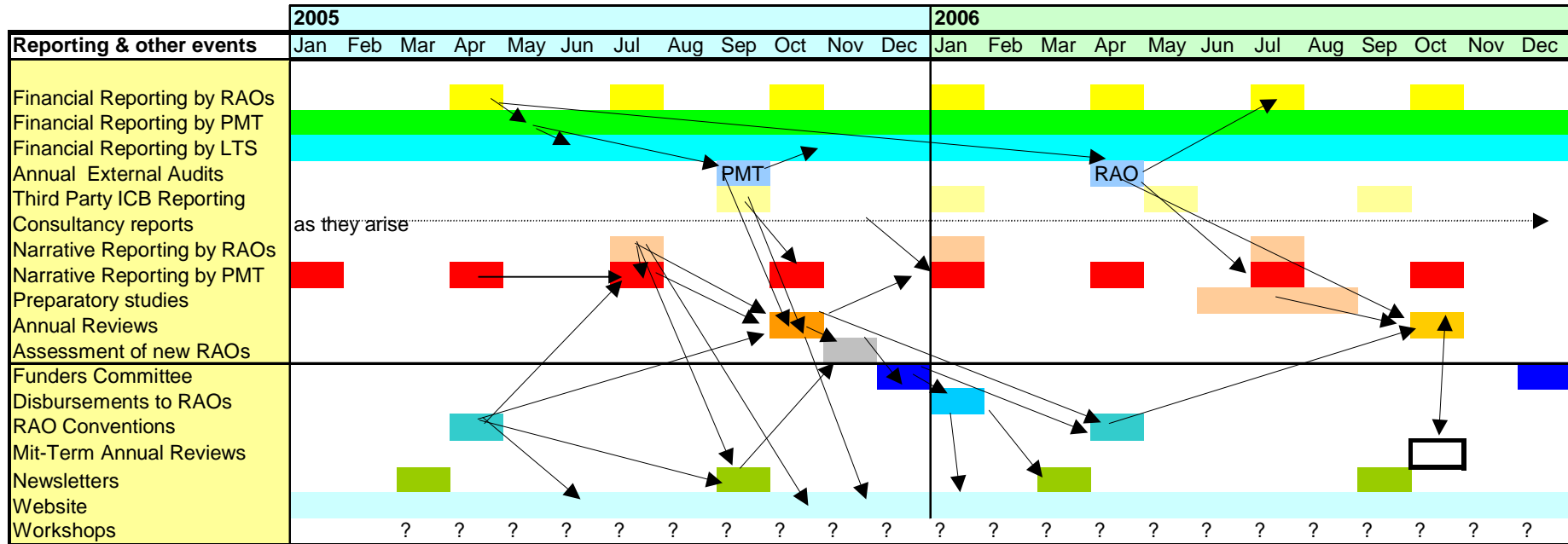
¹ A Gantt chart normally shows a list of project activities (in categories and sub-categories) down the left, and time units across the top, with timing of specific events shown as bars through rows of cells at the time of their expected occurrence, and lines between these indicating any critical paths, where the correct timing and sequence is crucial to the completion of a set of activities.

year period. The emphasis here was on ensuring that M&E activities were justified by feeding into other activities, and this was done in a timely manner. Placing them in a time line also helped ensure some realism in what was being planned. This is important because the resources available to the PMT are evidently quite limited. A slightly re-edited version of that Gantt chart is shown on the next page.

19. A cursory look at this Gantt chart suggests there is a major risk of a bottleneck around the planning of the first annual review. There are a large number of activities expected to feed into such an event, and it in turn is expected to feed into the planning and implementation of the next grant making round, expected to start shortly thereafter.
20. Some other important events were re-scheduled during the development of the Gantt chart. The Project Memorandum talks of Annual Reviews and a mid-term review that is expected 18 months into the project. Followed literally, this would mean three reviews between the end of 2005 and the end of 2006 (2 annual reviews and a mid-term review mid-year). It is now proposed that the 2006 annual review also function as the mid-term review.
21. This Gantt is clearly still a rough draft. A larger scale version needs to be developed, which take into account the whole of the expected lifespan of the project and a wider range of project outputs, especially the capacity building services, as well as annual budgets. It may also be useful to make use of software that is more purpose specific, such as MS Project, or one of its cheaper clones. However, one can still go a long way using the Draw function in Excel. For example, where there are multiple links into an event and multiple links out from that event it would be very useful to prioritise within both sets of links, so that when time and resources are scarce, the most important linkages in the process do get attended to. When done across the whole Gantt chart this may also shed light what other events are at risk of being neglected, because linkages to them have been de-prioritised. This is an area where I could provide further technical support.

M & E & Reporting Gantt chart

This version: RD 2nd May 2005



Linkages between the Logical Framework and reporting by RAOs

22. As can be seen from the Gantt chart the most frequent events will be the financial then progress reporting. Of necessity, the PMT has already invested time in developing appropriate reporting formats for RAOs to use. I have since examined these primarily in terms of how they fit with the Logical Framework, and the general ambitions of the project.
23. Given that they are required every three months, rather than six monthly, the financial reporting requirements are likely to have more impact on the funded RAOs, if only in terms of time consumed in their preparation. The Financial Status Annex will feed into two other project processes: (a) It will be one source of information for the proposed RAO audit, in 2006, (b) The income section of this annex should also feed into the proposed yearly review process, in that the first Purpose level objective refers to widening and strengthening of RAOs' income base.
24. The purpose of the Activity Monitoring Annex is less clear. Eleven items of information are sought about each activity and multiple activities are expected to be reported on for each expected RAO output, each quarter. This seems excessive, especially for a project where the main funding strategy is the provision of core funding, rather than project specific funding. In this case it is worth asking what really is of concern here.
25. My suggestion is that the bottom line question should be what has been *produced* with the money spent, not simply what things the money was spent on. With the core funded RAOs they should be free to manage their budgets in whatever ways that will generate the best outputs possible. But the G-RAP PMT should be able to ask questions about *efficiency and cost-effectiveness*: the cost structure of particular outputs and the relative costs of different kinds of outputs. This can be related to their remit, in the Logical Framework, to build RAO capacity. In order to do this, the most useful reporting format might be a (budget lines) *inputs x outputs* (services and products) matrix, so the cost of the all outputs produced is transparent and comparable. An example of this type of matrix was shown to the PMT in April. Then the RAOs' six monthly narrative report could report on the extent to which outputs were delivered to plan, and more importantly still, who used them and to what effect. More detailed examinations of whether the money was spent where it was reportedly spent should be reserved for less frequent but detailed annual audits (which are already planned for). Doing so would assume that the RAOs have their own financial record keeping systems, and that their financial reports to G-RAP are not their primary records.
26. In the six monthly narrative reporting format there is also a substantial focus on project activities, rather than outputs and their consequences. Some of the activity reporting sections make use of the organisational self-assessment categories (Table 2). While this makes sense for those RAOs who are using capacity building grants it makes less sense for those using core-funding grants only. It may be more advisable for the RAO's narrative reporting formats to be differentiated, according to the three main types of support they are receiving from G-RAP (described in Outputs 2,3,4).
27. There is not yet a clear focus in the narrative report format on the type of changes described in the Purpose and Goal level of the G-RAP Logical

Framework. The broad reporting categories of Vision and Objective should be either re-labelled as Goal and Purpose, or described much more explicitly as being about RAOs' products and services delivered (=Purpose) and changes in Government policy and practice (=Goal). It is changes at this level that should be of concern to the Funders Committee and Advisory Committees. Plus internal organisational changes within the RAOs who are receiving capacity building assistance.

28. It is likely that this proposal will meet with some resistance. Some RAOs may complain that changes in Government policy will take a long time to come about as a result of their interventions, and even then there will be attribution problems. This comment misses the point. The RAOs should be reporting on their *knowledge of, and interpretations of*, what is happening with government policy and practice towards the poor. That knowledge should already be there in some form, and it should be evolving over time. That is what they should be accountable for, along with production of services and products that are consistent with their views of what is happening. That is, they have and are implementing a coherent strategy.
29. There is also likely to be a serious internal objection, from the PMT itself. They appear to be under-resourced and have already raised concerns about what if, any analysis they will be able to make of RAO reports, both financial and narrative. This is a serious objection and needs to be raised with LTS and, via them, to the Donor's Committee. However, it will have more impact if it is associated with a clearly thought out proposal as to how extra PMT resources could make best uses of the data and analysis coming in via RAO reports. How will the PMT add value to these reports, through their capacity building work with RAOs and/or other means?
30. One area where it could do so, would be to use the RAO reports as inputs into the project's own public communications, via the proposed newsletter and project website (both shown in the Gantt chart above). These should be serving dual purposes, of public accountability and advocacy. The PMTs' analyses of RAO reports should also feed back into the design of capacity building inputs and even the design of the organisational self-assessment.
31. Returning to the format of the RAO narrative report, I would recommend that at the Purpose level (or the equivalent re-named section), the RAOs should be reporting on:
- The nature of the outputs they have produced, and who has used them. Including a self-assessment of their relative success. (Purposes 3 & 4)².
 - What were the most significant changes that have taken place in their network of relationships with key actors. These are:
 - Relationships with CBOs (Purpose 6)
 - Relationships amongst RAOs (Purpose 5)
 - Relationships with GoG (Purpose 7)
32. It would also be appropriate to have short reporting section on changes referred to at the other Purposes levels of the Logical Framework:
- Access to funding (Purpose 1) – mentioned above
 - Attracting and holding quality staff (Purpose 2)

² In one project I have been associated with the funded partners maintained a matrix detailing Outputs x Actors using those outputs, with the outputs listed in an accumulating chronological order

- Improved public credibility (Purpose 8)

Linkages between the Logical Framework and PMT budget process

33. The revised Logical Framework needs to link into the project budget planning and reporting procedures. During my visit a budget proposal was submitted to LTS using the pre-existing Logical Framework structure. That was unavoidable, because the revised version has not yet been approved. In that proposal the budget was sliced in two ways but in two separate sections: by Logical Framework outputs, and by budget line items as specified by LTS, and presumably DFID. The former meets the needs of the PMT whereas the latter meets the needs of LTS, and again presumably DFID. Recommendation: When the revised Logical Framework is approved, further budget plans should use a matrix format (budget line items x project activities or outputs), so that the relationship between the two perspectives on the budget can clearly be seen. Being able to cost the project's activities such as capacity building provision, and grant making, is important in terms of being able to attract new donors but so is being able to identify the line item composition of those activities. A copy of the example matrix can be provided if needed.

Review and evaluation processes

34. We held brief discussions about the role of annual and mid-term reviews, which have been referred to above. Along with the possible use of thematic studies to feed into the mid-term review. The timing, process and objectives of these reviews needs further discussion, along with consideration as to how the products would be best used. This will be one item to be included within the Action Plan (below)
35. In the discussions of the planned RAO convention there seemed to be issues at stake as to whose convention this was: who should be organising it and who should be benefiting. While it is important that RAOs take responsibility for events addressing their common interests, it also seems important to recognise that the PMT will need, from time to time, to organise events with RAOs that address its own needs.
36. In particular, I would recommend the PMT think of holding a workshop with funded RAOs to explain the G-RAP Logical Framework and how the PT intends to monitor and evaluate its performance in respect to the contents of the Logical Framework. To do so, the PMt will need the cooperation of the RAOs, and those needs will need to be explained and discussed.

Communications activities and strategy

37. The whole project is centred on communications activities, so in that sense it may seem redundant to talk about a communications strategy. There are however two levels of communications activities, both of which need to be taking place, and linked into each other. These are those undertaken by the funded RAOs and by the PMT. G-RAP needs a communications strategy that will map out how the activities and achievements of the funded RAOs can be communicated to key audiences, within and beyond "the project" (both to its actors and its to-be-documented processes). It is common for grant funding mechanisms to neglect this task.
38. The communications strategy should include the following elements:

- Contents: Information from RAO products and events, RAO reports to G-RAP, project workshops, etc. Plus information from other sources. Plus the PMT's own analyses of all of these – its own value added.
 - Audiences: individuals, groups and organisations it wants to reach
 - Issues: that it thinks it can link its contents to audiences
 - Media: websites, mailing lists, newsletters, workshops, etc that will enable these linkages to be met
 - Actors: responsible for ensuring these linkages are established. Within the PMT this may be one person only
39. The strategy will need not only list these elements, but also show how they will be linked together, and what linkages will be of what relative priority. This could include the use of the following types of linked matrices:
- Audiences x Issues
 - Content x Issues
 - Media x Audiences
 - Media x Time (Gantt chart)
40. These are plans only. Their realisation would need to be documented and periodically reviewed.

3.2 Small scale: Individual procedures within G-RAP

41. **Individual business processes also need to be well documented**, for two reasons. One is so they can be progressively improved upon, in a sustainable and replicable manner. Most processes change and evolve, but not always in an explicit, approved and retrievable way. The other is so they can be “sold” to prospective new donors, as part of the core competencies of the project. There are probably two kinds of core processes that need to be well documented and periodically reviewed and revised:
- The grant making process, for once-off grants, capacity building grants and core funding
 - The organisational self-assessment process
42. There are two aspects to the documentation and review process that will need to be considered
- Identification of all the discrete steps involved, who is responsible for them, and what documentation provides guidance on each step. Also important here is an estimate of the proportion of time spent on each step, or major group of steps.
 - Identification of feedforward and feedback loops between these various steps. Also important here is the prioritisation of those linkages, in terms of where most time and effort needs to be invested.
43. Both aspects can be captured in a matrix of the kind shown in Annex C. The diagonal cells describe each of the process steps, in as sequential order as is possible. People responsible for each step are documented in the appropriate rows on the right of the matrix. Documents detailing each step are detailed in the appropriate columns at the base of the matrix. Feed forward links are shown on the top right half of the matrix (using arrows from MS Word's “drawing” function). Feedback links are shown on the bottom left half of the matrix. The relative priority of the different linkages can be shown in the empty cells, which connect the row activity to the column activity.

44. A much simpler matrix can be used to identify changes that have been made, or need to be made to the steps within the process. Process steps are listed in one column, problems with each in the next, and proposed improvements in the next.
45. I have already raised one other issue associated with the grant making process. That is the theory that informs the decision making process that leads to the grant making decisions. RAOs are selected for funding on at least three types of criteria:
- Minimalist criteria that apply to all. E.g. being a legally constituted organisation, having a bank account etc.
 - Alignment criteria: Are they doing the kinds of things G-RAP wants to fund. Behind this question is a notion of the right mix of RAOs that will help G-RAP achieve its overall Goal.
 - Prospective performance criteria: What chance do they have of achieving what they want to achieve.
46. In the vast majority of grant making mechanisms, within aid programmes that I am aware of, little effort has been made to explicitly test, and then adjust, the prospective performance criteria, in the light of what has happened to previously funded grantees. In the G-RAP project there is a valuable opportunity and means to do so, which should be exploited. Each of the applicants for funding has already gone through an organisational self-assessment process. The assumptions being that capacities as tested by this tool have some linkage to subsequent performance as a RAO. What has not yet been made explicit is what combination of capacities is thought most likely be associated with good performance. This view could be identified during the next funding round, by including in the grant review process, a process of rating or ranking the approved grantees on their likely prospects of success in their work thereafter. A desk-based analysis could then be made of what, if any, self-assessment attributes were most associated with high ratings. That would then make the funding theory explicit.
47. Ideally, this would then be followed up by tracking of RAO's actual performance. The most immediate source of information would be narrative and financial reports. An annual success ranking could be done of all the funded RAOs, by PMT staff, using this and any other information to hand. Evaluations of RAOs (discussed below) could be used as independent checks on these judgements.
48. Mid-term and end-of-project reviews could then use the data from the appraisal stage, and subsequent monitoring and evaluation, to review the adequacy of the project's funding theory. This should then inform subsequent grant making processes, or future proposals for such processes.

4. The 3rd tool: Network Matrices And Diagrams

49. The LTS-Ernst Young technical proposal for the G-RAP bid places a substantial amount of attention to the building of connections between RAOs, between RAOs and CBOs and between RAOs and Government. Similarly, within the project memorandum dialogue and coalition building are seen as one of the main means of working, along with research and public communications. This emphasis is also visible as three of the eight Purposes of the Logical Framework. These networks of connections will be important sources of information, channels for disseminating information, and sources of legitimacy.

50. It is therefore important that the PMT are able to monitor and document what is happening with the linkages between the various actors in this project, especially amongst the RAOs, and between them and CBOs and with Government.
51. In April I have already proposed some simple tools for doing so for representing networks of actors. In summary they are:
- The use of actor x actor matrices, where cells entries describe the relationship between the row actor and the column actor
 - The use of actor x event matrices, where cells entries describe the relationship between the row actor and the column event. These can include RAO outputs and any other events organised by other parties, including G-RAP itself
 - The use of social network analysis software to convert this matrix data in to social network diagrams, which highlight the main features of the relationships that are present. Additional information can be represented through use of different colored, sized and shaped nodes, and different colored and sized links.
52. There are two data sources that can be used. One is the information provided in writing at the time of application for funding. This includes information on relationships with other organisations. It provides one source of baseline data. The other is available through one-to-one interviews with the RAOs, using relatively short and simple questionnaires. The possibility of collecting data this was discussed in April.
53. The important point to note here is that by collating data from individual RAOs G-RAP can develop a picture of the wider collective network that is unlikely to be available in its entirety to the individual RAOs. By feeding back this information to RAO's, especially in workshop contexts, G-RAP may be facilitating improved networking, as well as simply documenting the current situation, as a baseline.
54. Before steps are taken to gather information through an interview process it will be important that G-RAP identifies what kinds of relationships it is interested in. It is always useful if a questionnaire is informed by some sort of theory or hypothesis about what is or should be going on. A survey could ask for information about:
- When specific relationships were first established
 - The duration of existing relationships
 - The main function of the relationships that do exist: source of information, channels of influence, allies in arguments, brokers in disputes
 - The relative importance of different relationships
 - Where new relationships most need to be established
 - Which relationships are most and least troublesome
55. RAOs can also be connected less literally, but still very significantly, through:
- Their views of what GoG policies are of most concern
 - Their relationships with third parties (e.g CBOs, GoG and donors), which they may give different priorities to.
- These are probably more important, given the project's theory of change about how they need to be connected up, in order for pro-poor policy change to take place

5. The 4th tool: Most Significant Changes (MSC) monitoring

56. Monitoring of changes at the Goal level may be the most difficult of all. One proposal that has already been made is that the project needs to track changes in *what the RAOs know* about changes in Government policy, and any changes in *their interpretation* of these events. It is not the events themselves, but RAOs knowledge and attitude towards them that will have the most significance to the project.

57. A specific example of the importance of attitude is the RAOs view towards the GPRS itself. The original indicators for the project Goal all assumed that this was the main focus, but it is not necessarily the case that all RAOs see the GPRS as a focus of their work³. The revised Logical Framework Goal now has indicators that are not specifically focused on the GPRS. This may or may not be acceptable to the Funders Committee.

58. Three *types* of indicators are proposed in the revised Logical Framework:

- GPRS Indicators, as prioritised by the Funders Committee. These are objective measures of changes, which will ideally focus on poverty outcome measures that should be of concern to the project. They will help give the PMT and funded RAOs a focus. Funded RAOs may of course challenge these choices.
- RAOs will identify some appropriate indicators for monitoring policy changes which are of shared concern. These do not need to have to be consensual, amongst all funded RAOs. They could be as agreed amongst a sub-group of RAOs with common policy concerns. The PMT could help identify those sub-groups, by surveying, collating and feeding back policy change priorities amongst the funded RAOs (part of the proposed social network analysis).
- Monitoring of “Most Significant Changes” (MSC) in government policy by RAOs. This is a non-indicator approach to monitoring, which is participatory and qualitative in focus, and has been used in a range of developed and developing countries over the last ten years⁴.

59. MSC monitoring would need to be done using a combination of written reporting, such as the six monthly narrative reports, and RAO workshops. Written reports would provide the raw material for the participatory analysis of significant changes in workshops. It would be appropriate for the RAO’s narrative reporting format to seek MSC reports in a number of “domains⁵” of concern to the project. The revised Logical Framework (Goal level OVI column) suggested the following domains:

- Government policy making processes
- Budget allocations and their relationships to policy priorities
- Expenditure of budget, in relation to budget allocations made
- Services provision, with the budget resources
- Gender dimensions of all of the above

6. The Action Plan

60. The proposed M&E Framework (MEF) Action Plan has three related components:

- Outputs, available to G-RAP
- Activities, needed to produce the outputs

³ A social network analysis that included data on RAOs views of different GoG policies would help highlight the extent to which this was a significant issue.

⁴ See the MSC Guide at www.mande.co.uk/docs/MSCGuide.htm

⁵ In MSC monitoring these are equivalent to the Finance, Sports, International, and Leisure sections of newspapers. They are broad categories of types of change, not specific indicators.

- Timings, of the activities and outputs
61. The draft action plan is sketched out in an Excel spreadsheet. A graphic image is shown in Annex D. A digital copy of the spreadsheet has been sent to G-RAP separately to this report. My proposed inputs are indicated by cells with consultancy day values in them (or portions thereof)
62. Issues that need to be discussed with the PMT include:
- The list of events in the Action Plan
 - Their timing and sequence
 - The relative priority of the major tasks proposed for June
 - Acceptance of the Logical Framework
 - Revision of reporting formats
 - Planning of the baseline survey collection
 - Process mapping: especially the main project cycle Gantt chart
63. The most immediate pressing issue is whether a workshop could be held with willing RAOs on Friday 10th June, to discuss
- The revised G-RAP Logical Framework, and its implications
 - Proposals for a revised reporting format
 - Plans for the baseline survey, especially RAO interviews about policy / issue priorities and linkages with other RAOs, CBOs and others.
-

Annex A: Proposed revised version of the G-RAP Logical Framework, as developed in April 2005

<i>Narrative Summary</i>	<i>Objectively Verifiable Indicators</i>	<i>Means of Verification</i>	<i>Important Assumptions</i>
<p>GOAL <i>[changes in GoG]</i></p> <p>Pro-poor policy adopted and implemented effectively by GoG</p>	<p>[Using mixed methods]</p> <p>64. GPRS Indicators, as prioritised by the Funders Committee</p> <p>65. RAOs will identify some appropriate indicators for monitoring policy changes which are of shared concern</p> <p>66. Monitoring of “Most Significant Changes” in government policy by RAOs [a non-indicator approach]</p> <p>Provisional areas to be monitored by 1 & 2 & 3 above</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy making process • Budget allocation • Expenditure of budget • Service provision • Gender dimensions of above 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual Progress Report on GPRS and other M&E products, produced by NDPC 2. RAO Convention records 3. Thematic Workshop Findings 	<p>Linkages between policy implementation and lives of poor people [=Super Goal] will be monitored by RAOs and CBOs</p>

<i>Narrative Summary</i>	<i>Objectively Verifiable Indicators</i>	<i>Means of Verification</i>	<i>Important Assumptions</i>
<p>PURPOSES <i>[changes by G-RAP RAOs]</i></p> <p>1. RAOs that have been given access to G-RAP capacity building grants are able to gain better access to funding</p>	<p>Number of RAOs gaining access to core funding increase</p> <p>Number of RAOs gaining access to funding from new sources increases</p> <p>Number of RAOs gaining access to increased funding from their existing sources increases</p>	<p>G-RAP funding allocation tables</p> <p>Financial Report from RAOs (quarterly)</p> <p>Mid-Term Review field work</p>	<p>RAOs have capacity to absorb additional funds</p> <p>Donors continue to see CSO engagement in policy advocacy as a high priority</p>
<p>2. RAOs are more able to attract, retain, motivate and develop capable staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Progressive improvements of professional competence of researchers hired by RAOs • Improved performance of existing staff • Mean duration of vacancies declines over time • Sick leave rates decline • Mean length of staff contracts grows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAO personnel records • RAO Staff appraisal records 	<p>RAOs do want capacity building which include development of HR systems</p> <p>There are enough qualified researchers and HRM staff available in the market to meet RAO demand</p>

<i>Narrative Summary</i>	<i>Objectively Verifiable Indicators</i>	<i>Means of Verification</i>	<i>Important Assumptions</i>
3. RAOs generate high quality evidence-based research based on robust primary sources	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. [RAO] Peer Review assessments improvement over time 2. RAO references cited in government and parliament policy documents 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Peer review reports 2. RAO reports to MTR teams 	<p>RAOs are willing to engage in a peer review process</p> <p>Government policy-makers are willing to make effective use of information available from NGOs</p>
4. RAOs package evidence based research and use it in targeted advocacy activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different messages are sent to different audiences. Not broadcast to all. • Diversity of info products increases over time • Timeliness improves 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Database on contacts made with targeted audiences 2. Six-monthly reports 3. Copies of info products sent to PMT 4. RAO workplan & Progress Report 	<p>A good advocacy organisation will maintain a good contacts database</p> <p>RAO workplan has taken into account the policy cycle of their targeted institutions</p>
5 Improved cooperation between RAOs	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More RAOs share a widening range of information with each other 2. Number of joint funding proposals increases 3. Number of jointly managed advocacy campaigns increases 4. Number of non-G-RAP funded RAOs included in above trends also increases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baseline and follow-up surveys of RAOs re relationships with other RAOs • Reports of Annual RAO Convention – Plans of Action • MTR team 	<p>Competitive grant allocation process does not inhibit RAO collaboration</p>

<i>Narrative Summary</i>	<i>Objectively Verifiable Indicators</i>	<i>Means of Verification</i>	<i>Important Assumptions</i>
<p>6. RAOs build up a strategic set of relationships with CBOs.</p>	<p>Number of partnerships between RAOs and CBOs increases – overall.</p> <p>New relationships are planned (not just happening)</p> <p>Strategically irrelevant relationships with CBOs are ended.</p> <p>Existing relationships are prioritised. and this informs allocation of RAO resources</p> <p>RAO agendas encompass local and regional issues. Not just national level issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAO Progress Reports • RAO workplans • Mid-term Review field work • RAO workplans • RAO websites, workplans, and Progress Reports & annexes 	<p>Some CBOs will be available and interested in working with the RAOs, in a way that fits with the RAO's strategy</p> <p>Trustworthiness of information collated and analysed by CBOs.</p> <p>CBOs are able to competently disseminate policy issues information from RAOs</p>

<i>Narrative Summary</i>	<i>Objectively Verifiable Indicators</i>	<i>Means of Verification</i>	<i>Important Assumptions</i>
7. RAOs build up a strategic set of relationships with government, parliament and MDBS donors	<p>Number of partnerships between RAOs and government, parliament and MDBS donors increases - overall</p> <p>New relationships are planned (not just happening)</p> <p>Strategically irrelevant relationships with government, parliament and MDBS donors are ended.</p> <p>Existing relationships are prioritised, and this informs allocation of RAO resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RAO Progress Reports • RAO workplans • Mid-term Review field work • RAO websites, workplans, and Progress Reports & annexes 	<p>Not all relationships are formal and explicit, but nevertheless these can be valuable.</p> <p>Valuable relationships will become institutionalised and survive changes in leadership.</p>
8. The credibility and legitimacy of RAOs is improved, in the eyes of GoG and Ghana public	<p>More RAO documents are referred to in GoG publications</p> <p>GoG and parliament contract RAOs for their services</p> <p>RAOs are increasingly invited to debate policy issues on radio and TV</p>	<p>RAO Progress Reports to G-RAP – in annexes to</p> <p>RAOs Quarterly Financial Reports</p> <p>Mid-term Review field work</p>	<p>GoG can see RAOs as potential providers of paid services e.g. consultancies</p> <p>Credibility of external donor funding of G-RAP type funding mechanisms is not undermined</p>

Narrative Summary	Objectively Verifiable Indicators	Means of Verification	Important Assumptions
9. RAO autonomy is not undermined through participation in G-RAP	<p>RAOs are able to criticise G-RAP, and its funding partners</p> <p>Diversity is maintained in RAO research & advocacy agendas</p> <p>Diversity in funding sources is maintained (See Purpose 1)</p>	<p>Minutes of RAO meetings and Convention</p> <p>Mid-Term Review</p> <p>RAO Strategic Plans</p> <p>RAO publications</p> <p>RAO Quarterly Financial Reports</p>	All RAOs want to be autonomous and not become more dependent on funders such as G-RAP
OUTPUTS [by G-RAP PMT]			
1. G-RAP provides RAO donors with an attractive multi-donor funding mechanism which improves aid delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing donors fulfil initial commitments Number of participating donors increases over time G-RAP % overheads are less than (a) direct funding by donors, (b) comparable multi-donor funding mechanisms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> G-RAP activity and financial reports MTR team make cost comparisons with direct funding by donors and RAVI? 	Donors are administratively able to make timely disbursements of funding, as committed
2. G-RAP provides Core Funding to RAOs for three to five year periods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> G-RAP provide at least \$75,000 per year per RAO, to at least 5 RAOs per year, for at least 3 years These target will be revised, as donor funding increases 	G-RAP activity and financial reports	That there will be enough RAOs identified who can absorb the Core Funds, within the set funding criteria
3. G-RAP provides Once-Off grants to RAOs to enable them to become eligible for core funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> G-RAP provide between 10% -15% of total grant value to emerging RAOs each year. This target will be revised, as donor funding increases 	G-RAP activity and financial reports	

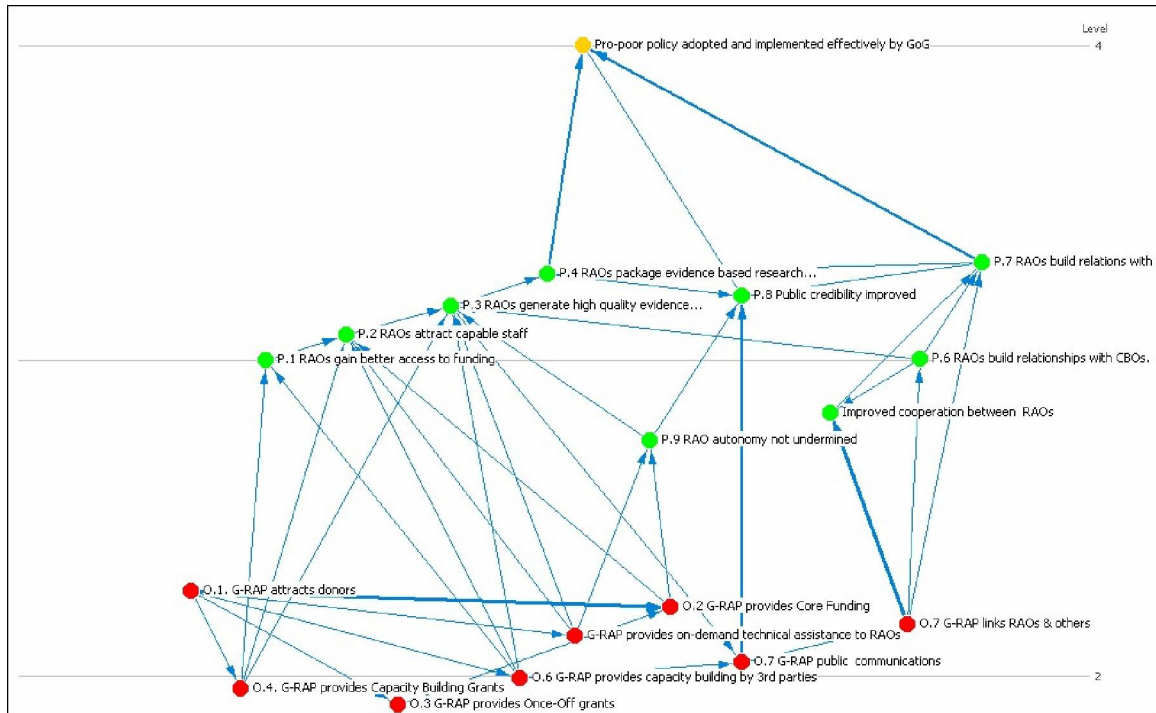
<i>Narrative Summary</i>	<i>Objectively Verifiable Indicators</i>	<i>Means of Verification</i>	<i>Important Assumptions</i>
4. G-RAP provides Capacity Building Grants to RAOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> G-RAP provides 5% to 15% of the total annual grants budget for Capacity Building Grants for RAOs This target will be revised, as donor funding increases 	G-RAP activity and financial reports	There are enough capable third party providers of capacity building assistance
5. G-RAP provides on-demand technical assistance to RAOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> G-RAP provides a maximum of 10% of PMT technical staff time to RAOs on demand 	G-RAP time logs	
6. G-RAP provides capacity building to RAOs through third parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum of 10 days and maximum of 25 days per RAO, per 12 months grant Completion of OD plan by participating RAOs The above to be provided to at least 12 for Year1 RAOs This target will be revised, as donor funding increases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> G-RAP contracts (including ToRs) with Ibis, SNV, and other third party providers Three ICB reviews per contract G-RAP activity and financial reports Two monthly visits to RAOs by PMT-OD person 	See above assumption
7. G-RAP promotes and facilitates relationships between RAOs and other stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback of survey findings to RAOs (& number of participants in survey) Number and scale of collective events aided by G-RAP 	G-RAP PMT Six-monthly narrative reports Minutes and proceedings of workshops etc	

<i>Narrative Summary</i>	<i>Objectively Verifiable Indicators</i>	<i>Means of Verification</i>	<i>Important Assumptions</i>
8. G-RAP publicly communicates G-RAP's objectives, achievements, information resources, issues, participating stakeholders, etc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of Ghanaian and international members of emailing list continues to grow • # of copies of Newsletter distributed to RAOs, INGOs, donors, parliamentarians and others. • # of visitors to G-RAP Website continues to grow • At least 1 RAO convention held per year • Increase in requests for information made to G-RAP office 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email list records • Website logs • Contacts database • G-RAP Six-monthly narrative report 	
ACTIVITIES [by G-RAP]			
1. Management and governance structures are established for G-RAP, including an Advisory Board and Funders Committee, and RAO Convention			
2. G-RAP establishes entities and procedures that enable pooled funding support to RAOs			
3. G-RAP establishes a RAO selection procedure, and associated funding strategy, that enables targeting of capacity building, and core funding grants to selected RAOs			

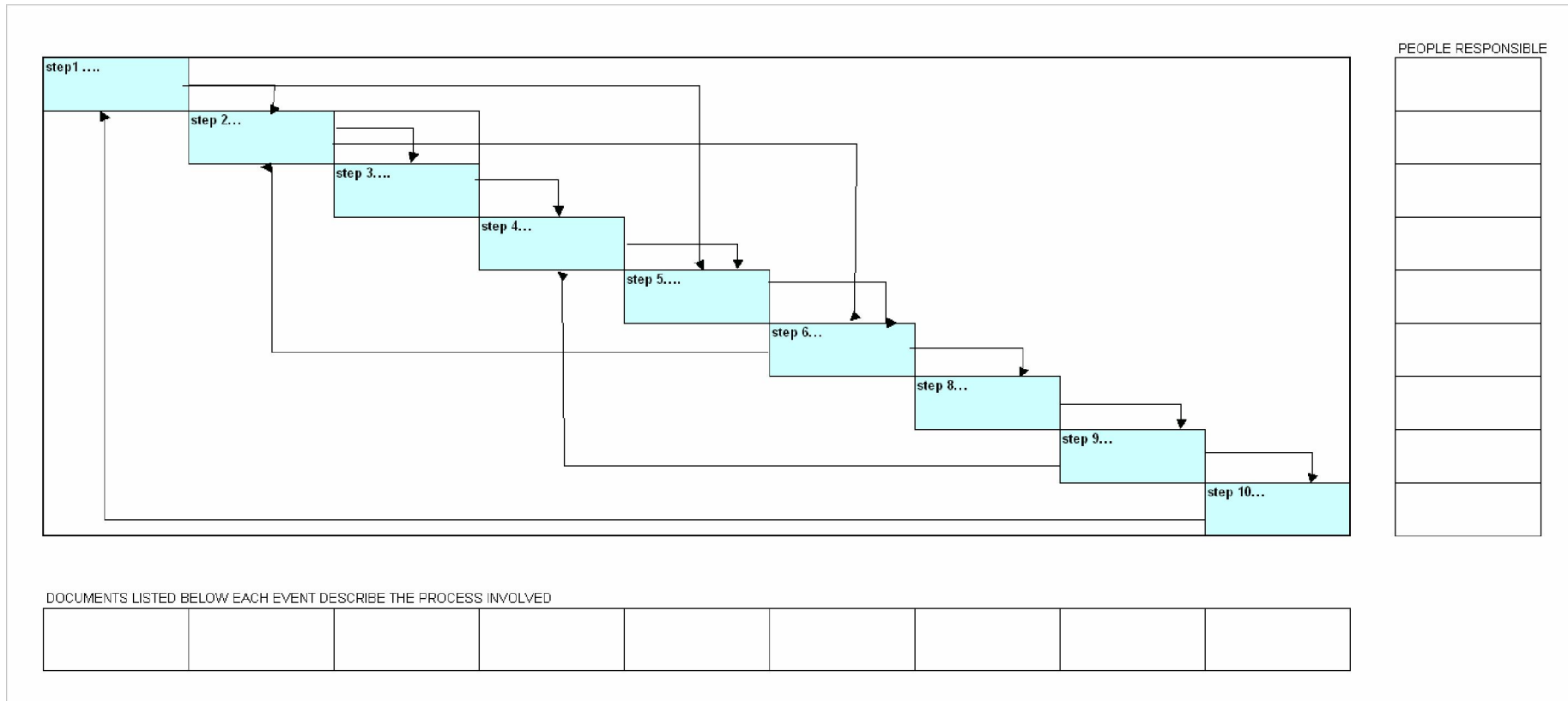
<i>Narrative Summary</i>	<i>Objectively Verifiable Indicators</i>	<i>Means of Verification</i>	<i>Important Assumptions</i>
4. G-RAP establishes financial procedures for use within G-RAP and by funded RAOs			
5. G-RAP establishes an organisational capacity assessment procedure.			
6. G-RAP identifies third parties capable of providing capacity building assistance to RAOs.			
7. G-RAP identifies means of facilitating networking between RAOs and with other actors [>Output 7]			
8. G-RAP establishes a range of communication channels, and develops an associated communication strategy, for communications with RAOs and other actors. [>Output 8]			
9. G-RAP periodically reviews and improves its internal procedures, as listed above, to ensure incremental improvement over time. This will include attention to gender mainstreaming, within all G-RAP procedures.			

Annex B: A graphic interpretation of the causal links between Outputs, Purpose and Goal

Note: This needs discussions with the PMT and further revision



Annex C: Representing business processes



Annex D: A Draft Action Plan for Developing the G-RAP M&E Framework

G-RAP M&E Action Plan			Timing											
Draft as of: 8th May 2005 RD			2005											
Outputs	Activities	Notes Days	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1 M&E Framework documented	M&E Consultant Reports	4.5				1.5	1	1		1	or			
2 Revised Log Framework	PMT agree on revised Logical Framework					5								
	Comments on LogFrame from LTS & EY													
	Comments from Advisory Committee													
	Consent from Funders Committee													
	Shared with RAOs								0.25					
3 Revised reporting Formats	LogFrame up on G-RAP website													
	Re-draft formats, within PMT							0.5						
4 Baseline survey completed	Discuss with RAOs								0.25					
	Agree on contents needed								0.25					
	Collate data from Applications									1				
	Plan RAO interviews								1					
	Discuss plan with RAOs								0.25					
	RAO interviews													
	Analysis of RAO interview data										2	or		
5 Process Maps created	Rank expected success of RAOs								0.25					
	Revise G-RAP Gantt chart					0.5		0.25						
	Document 1st Grant Making process									0.5	or			
	Document 1st Org Self-assessment										0.5	or		
	Review 1st iterations													
6 Evaluations and reviews planned	Dates and functions established													
	Key links with other events established													
7 Communications strategy developed	Draft document prepared for PMT								1					
	Coms strategy discussed with Advisory Committee													
	Website and mailing lists set up													
	Contacts database established													
	Events program scheduled													
Consultancy inputs			18	0	0	0	7	1	4	2	4	0	0	0